

**Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Building and Fire Regulation
Code Change Cycle Process for Updating Building and Fire Regulations**

1. A Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) is the first step in the regulatory update process. When published in the Virginia Register, a 30 day period is established for the submittal of comments concerning the Board of Housing and Community Development's intent to update the building and fire codes. Approval for publishing the NOIRA has to be obtained through the Executive Branch of the state government (the Department of Planning and Budget, the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and the Governor's Office). The NOIRAs are published in the Virginia Register. The Virginia Register is a publication of the Virginia Code Commission used as a clearinghouse for viewing changes to any state agency's regulations. The Virginia Register may be viewed at <http://legis.state.va.us/codecomm/register/REGINDEX.HTM>.
2. The next step in the code change process is the formulation and publishing of proposed regulations. The Board of Housing and Community Development approves proposed regulations for the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC), Virginia Certification Standards (VCS), Virginia Manufactured Home Safety Regulations (MHSR) and the Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR). Those proposed regulations are considered for approval through the Executive Branch agencies and are published in the Virginia Register once authorized.
3. Once the proposed regulations are published, a 60-day public comment period for the submittal of any code change proposals to change the proposed regulations will be observed. The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) accept code change proposals which have been submitted by various work groups and committees and by individuals or organizations. The last day for the acceptance of code change proposals is, based on when the proposed regulations are published. If the deadline changes, it will be announced on this Web page. Any proposals received after the deadline will be held over for the next code change process.
4. During the 60-day comment period, the Board of Housing and Community Development is will also conduct a public hearing to permit oral comment to accompany the submittal of code change proposals. The time and location of the hearing will be contained in the notice of public hearing found in the Virginia Register with the proposed regulations.
5. After the 60-day comment period ends and the public hearing has been held, DHCD staff will compile public comment and code change proposals. A staff evaluation will be done for each proposal and then a compilation document will be developed. This compilation document will contain all the code change proposals, testimony of the public hearing and the staff evaluations.
6. Once the compilation document is available, a second comment period will be established. This comment period provides the opportunity for all interested parties to review all proposals submitted and to review the staff evaluations for all proposals. The Board will accept comments during this period on any proposals and on the staff evaluations. In other words, if you or your group wishes to argue against a proposal, you may submit comments requesting the Board to reject the proposal providing any necessary substantiation. If you or your group disagrees with a staff evaluation, then you may submit comments to that effect. You may also submit comment supporting a particular proposal.
7. At the end of the second comment period, all comments will be compiled and the Board will consider each proposal. Once the Board's decisions are made, staff will prepare the final regulations for submittal through the Executive Branch agencies and for final publication in the Virginia Register.